

Railway to the Southwest.

An interesting railway project is soon to be brought before the Legislature. It is a proposition to incorporate a narrow-gauge railway company, to be styled "The Virginia Mineral and Gypsum Railroad Company." It is proposed to start from a point of connection with the Richmond and Alleghany railway at or near the mouth of Craig's creek, in Botetourt county, and passing through Craig, Giles, Blount, Tazewell, and Russell counties towards, we suppose, Pound Gap, in the latter county.

It is claimed by the advocates of this project that it opens the way through a region that is richer in coal and iron than any other in Virginia, while the deposit of gypsum is richer and more extensive than any deposit of the kind on the continent. There are certainly very rich and extensive beds of all these kinds in the line of the projected route.

The narrow-gauge railway is an efficient agent in the pioneer business of developing the mineral wealth of the country. An undeveloped land is always poor when the question comes to building railroads. That is the time when, if that mode of communication with the outside world is resorted to, it is impossible to gather the means to build a first-class broad-gauge road. The narrow-gauge or nothing must be the decision of the people of such a country. Begin with that gauge, and if power, and wealth, and energy be developed by it, why, it will follow that more vigorous enterprises will soon be established, and the higher modes of comfort and transportation secured by wealth will distinguish the land.

The narrow-gauge road has been a grand success, and its agency will be extended to the advantage of civilization. There are sections and conditions where that sort of road will not answer at all. But, again, there are others in which no other road will succeed. For these narrow-gauge roads is a godsend. It will benefit those sections by developing their mineral wealth, and by bringing them into communication with prosperous and enterprising regions, from which they will acquire new impulses and new energies, resulting in wealth and social advantages that could not be secured in any other way.

The starting point of this idea brings to memory some pleasant places—some brave and bright waters and serene and smiling meadows that clothed the feet and charming patches of the sides of bold mountains that cheered the traveller as he made his way through the region that will be traversed by the proposed line. The same traveller in his mind's eye sees the coming railway winding among the scenes in which he delighted, and may people them with active and thriving populations, turning into wealth the now dormant riches that are hidden in the earth. Through the whole line abound sources of comfort, pleasure, and thrift, perhaps increasing as you advance until you reach the lovely hills of Russell, where the mind, wearied by the never-ending interest so busily abated upon the country, desires rest and composure.

With a railway through this route to Russell, the seeker of pleasure or of health will find it unsurpassed for its many delights, and the company that builds the road will enjoy the unalloyed satisfaction of knowing that it is entirely free from any demands of "restitutions," Mr. Dickenson, of Russell. He will have the chief desire of his life and be at rest. If the "Mineral and Gypsum Company" will have this gratification, we are happy to say that other railroads will be also blessed, for they will be assured that they, too, will be delivered from the irrepressible Dickenson. They may build ten miles of railroad or get an amendment to their charter without being called upon to build a railway to Pound Gap! What a blessing that will be!

Pacific Railroads.

It is announced that there will be a motion on Saturday next in the Senate to take up the Texas-Pacific Railway bill. We shall probably learn then whether there is any truth in the rumors about an alliance between Huntington and Scott.

If not, we shall no doubt be treated to some new evidence of the stupidity and folly of southern representatives, which seldom fail to mar the interests of that unfortunate part of the Union.

Three lines were selected by Congress as proper for transcontinental railways: a northern line, a central line, and a southern line. The central line was hurried up during the war, and got such advancement that it was completed shortly after the establishment of peace. It came out with its Credit-Mobilier fame, and with immense pecuniary power. The northern line, under the auspices of JAY COOKE and his syndicate, was soon rushed into insolvency. The southern line, under a cloud of financial dishonor brought on by the incapacity of FLETCHER, made frequent attempts to get upon its feet, but has been obstructed with many disasters and crippled by the adroit opposition of the Central Pacific, which has sought to monopolize transcontinental commerce by occupying the southern route as well as the central.

It is clearly the interest of the South that the southern line should be independent. It is the vital interest of the whole nation that there should be competition in the matter of transcontinental transportation of freight and passengers. The according of a monopoly of this business to the Central Pacific will be an outrage upon the whole nation and an outrage as we have often said, upon public liberty.

And what do we see in the "poor South" on this matter? Why, discord and silly jealousy and impracticable folly. One southern senator must have another amendment, when they know that no bill can pass amidst their disagreements. Senator BROWN, of South Carolina, takes the studs as to the point of crossing of the Mississippi river. He will vote for no road that crosses higher up than Nicksburg, leaving out of view all questions of practicability and eligibility. And now comes, perhaps, that most visionary and impracticable of American statesmen, Mr. JEFFERSON DAVIS, to give a finishing touch to the depravity of the monopoly of southern statesmen, by setting down also the point for crossing, and declaring that the Texas-Pacific bill is only a feeder for the North, that threatens the irreparable ruin of southern interests.

Well, we have been wearied with the folly and infidelity of southern statesmen, and now we have to say that we hope they will take some decisive step and either stand by the South, or go over to the other side. We want to see the matter tested at once. If our unlamented southern representatives

intend to desert the South and hasten to ruin, let them show their hand. At least, let them bring northern people to face this question: "Shall there be no competition to protect American commerce from the 'odious and grinding exactions of a monopoly of the continent?' That is the question for them; and if they find no reason to act for their own protection, then it is indeed time for us all to fall down and submissively to permit the superb car of monopoly to roll over us."

**Subsidizing Steamers.**  
We have our own notions about subsidizing steamers. We are not at all inclined to admit that sort of thing. We think we see in it a great means of fostering the principle of monopoly to the serious injury of the energy and enterprise that is struggling against adverse circumstances, and would triumph gloriously if left to compete against a rivalry that depends upon its own resources, unaided by Government at subsidy. But it is apparent that the moment the Government steps in with its powerful purse the battle is decided against the merit of individual energy, and too often in favor of corruption.

It is the true policy of Government as it is of true statesmanship that nothing avails to the development of the skill and energy of private enterprise should be allowed where it is possible to prevent it. And beyond all question the Government itself should never interpose to break down such enterprise by voting large sums to build up monopolies that are destructive to private enterprise and are the cankers that ultimately corrupt and gangrene the National Legislature. The monopoly walks over acres of ruined adventurers and engulfs the reputations of hosts of public representatives who have been inveigled into the maelstrom of extravagance and vice by those to whom they had confided the keys that opened the coffers of the nation.

For the sake of the national enterprise and manhood these corrupt and corrupting subsidies ought never to be made. They minister to vice and profligacy, tend to dwarf the public energy, diminish true merit, and sow the manhood of the nation. There is a scheme for subsidizing the Brazilian trade with steamers endowed with bounty that is obtained, as we believe, corruptly from the National Treasury. There has, we might apprehend, been some saving in the commercial spirit of this city to the meretricious appearances worn by the subsidized enterprise. At least, so far has this subsidence of opposition to it as to lead to the appeal that if the line must be, it should touch at Norfolk. Well, if it must be, we say so, too, with this condition: that it shall not touch at the office of the Norfolk Virginian!

But why give up? We have liberty still. The contract is not yet complete. Do we not know what fine sail-vessels we had in the Rio trade? Do we not know that our four was better carried in the sailing ships of the Curry Line than it could possibly be carried in steam lines? Do we not know that for all the ports of Virginia the trade as it was formerly is the best we could have? That it afforded the widest scope for enterprise—for profit—for the reward of merit, energy, sagacity, and private enterprise? Unquestionably. The Government subsidies—the Government lines—the enemy of LIBERTY itself—proposes the destruction of all this sort of enterprise—all the incentives to energy and activity. It proposes to spread over all this the poisonous shadow of the upas tree of governmental subsidy—governmental corruption.

The nation should regard with horror this tendency of the times to subsidies of the general commerce of the nation as a tendency to that policy which breeds corruption and infests all the departments of Government with depravity.

The people can take care of their interests if left alone. But if the Government with an avicious eye undertakes to interfere and take out of that commerce slices for the personal benefit of the representatives of the people the enterprise and glory of the nation itself will be dwarfed below the standard of other nations, and the National Government will be galloping with the worm of corruption and become utterly insubstantial and rotten.

Therefore we hope the strategies of the ocean steamer subsidies is near an end.

We conclude with the following sound opinion of the New York Times:

There are many things which Congress can properly do to advance our foreign trade, but to subsidize steamers, directly or indirectly, in any form whatever, is not one of them.

**GENERAL ECHOLS'S DEFENSE.**—A friend brings us the following extract from a letter from General ECHOLS himself, explaining the position he occupied with regard to the Richmond and Alleghany railroad. It is substantially the same with the explanation already published in this paper; but we desire that the General should be fully explained.

We renew our own opinion that the General's idea of the possibility of getting a higher price for the canal is no good reason for longer delaying the liberty to the people of Richmond that a railroad up James river would give them. The hope of any such advantage by delay would be hoping against hope. The delay of a single year would lose more to Richmond and to Virginia than could be repaid by any increased price that could be regarded as possible. So, also, as to the "central line" in the quotation from the president of the canal. That central line could never be of advantage to Richmond unless it were occupied by a railway. We would almost as likely that Richmond were tied to the little creek that runs through Staunton as to be permanently chained to the canal.

We must take General ECHOLS's avowal of his friendship for the railway on James river, but congratulate ourselves most heartily that we are not doomed to await his tardy policy as the way to get the road. General ECHOLS says:

"My position seems to be misunderstood by some parties in regard to the Richmond and Alleghany Railroad bill. I am not, and never have been, opposed to the construction of a railroad up the James-River Valley. On the contrary, I think that such an improvement would be very valuable to the State and to the citizens along the line of the proposed road. My objections to the bill were—first, that it did not demand sufficient guarantees of compliance with the contract, and did not properly guard the interests of the State. This objection was partly removed by the amendments which those who agreed with me succeeded in putting to the bill. And secondly, I objected to the bill because I thought that if the proper course was pursued, and if we would invite competition, we might have the railroad built and serve some besides out of the immense investment (\$7,400,000) which the State has in the work. There is no man in the General Assembly whose private interests would be more advanced than mine would be by the construction of this road, yet, acting in my representative capacity, I have no right to demand that it be built. But an honest man would not do that. I think it is the interest of the whole State."

of the company has reported that it will soon be better able than ever before to resist the action of floods. In his report to his stockholders, made on the 20th November last, he said: "One of the most striking features of the situation is, that it has become common among certain of our own people to decry and underestimate the value of the great central route."

**The Folly of Bigotry.**  
Yes indeed. On the subject of the putting a check upon Chinese immigration the New York Journal of Commerce raves like one of those mad fanatics who have been for nearly forty years endeavoring to drag down the superior race in this country to appease the wild and foolish conceit of a bigoted notion of the equality of human races. We are greatly surprised at this. We think it strange that the editorial mind of the Journal of Commerce, so clear and just on general subjects, should be so blinded on this one. It descends to abuse of the House of Representatives for passing the anti-Chinese bill—a thing shocking in the staid and civil Journal. It declares that the bill was passed by "brute force and a skulking evasion of duty and moral responsibility befitting so narrow-minded, bigoted, and unjust a measure." Oh, he on the Journal! It has gone on the real side of bigotry and fanaticism, and would deny to the nation all power to protect itself from the fearful influx of a dangerous population. It has fallen under the poisonous influence of a bigotry and fanaticism which has gone to the extreme of making war upon the Caucasian type of man, which rules the land, and must continue to rule it, or it will sink into the low order of barbarism. To deny the nation the right to protect society against the demoralizing effects of an excessive influx of Chinese is but to say that the American nation must submit to be overthrown by a predominance of Asiatic and African races, and what is that but to say that those races are better than the American-Caucasian, and must triumph? Such nonsense is unworthy of the Journal of Commerce. Such treachery to the superior race is unworthy of an enlightened and philosophic mind. The American nation is equal to the duty of taking care of itself. It will never be strangled by the African or Asiatic Boas. It will, as surely as it lives, finally secure to the Union that homogeneity of peoples which is essential to American liberty and independence.

**The Potter Committee.**  
—It is hoped, will wind up its work this week. Then come two reports. Each side will attempt to convict the other of bad practices. We know which side will be correct in its judgment, and the device of it is, so does everybody else. And how is the nation to be disengaged from this muddle? Then comes that other abortion, the Teller committee, the work of Mr. BLAINE. That will bring in two reports and more confusion for honest people. The nation has come to a pretty pass. The investigations of alleged frauds of politicians and executive officers of Government are taking a vast deal of money out of the Treasury with no advantage to the people.

We do hope that when these committees have finished their work they will be equally successful in finishing themselves. We hope never to see another Potter or Teller committee while we live. They are both abortions—unnecessary for—set work on matters beyond solution, or solution to any solid and satisfactory purpose; and they must end in utter uselessness and absurdity.

The Bridge.

We trust that the agitation of the bridge subject will not end in taxing the comers and goers across James river. To tax people who live so near one another for crossing the river—such a river as James river—would be a backsliding shameful to an enlightened community. Even savages hover about the beautiful river, and are sure to "cross to the other side" unless the inhospitality of savagery repels them. We ought to encourage crossing such a river. In the enlightened spirit of commerce our streets should be extended across the river, and all people should be free to walk in the streets themselves from side to side of the river. This is civilization—true, enlightened community. Let Richmond turn its back forever upon the effete notion of hampering and shackling social and commercial intercourse. That policy don't suit these days.

Our friend Dr. MOFFETT, of Rockingham, complains that we have placed him in a position of irredeemable hostility to the Richmond and Alleghany railroad, which he declares is not correct, and having a wonderful affinity and love for all men who favor that providentially-created scheme for the security and thrift of Virginia, we fall like a ripe pear, into the affections of any man who possesses that key to our heart. We believe Dr. MOFFETT is the friend of our darling road. Why should we not? He says so himself, and who knows Dr. MOFFETT better than he does? Yes; Dr. MOFFETT and ourselves will celebrate the opening of that grand artery of communication and renew the mutual assurances of our distinguished consideration. The settlement of the public debt, the construction of the Richmond and Alleghany railroad, and the revival and maintenance of the public credit through the music of the tinkling bell of the Moffett register, is the platform upon which Dr. MOFFETT and ourselves stand.

Let it be remembered in the midst of this din which the convicts are raising that there is absolutely nothing but their usurped talents upon which the Florida and South Carolina canvassers can be accused of a willingness to be corrupted.—Tribune.

True enough. The Republican villains destroyed all the proofs, and gave their confederates fat offices.

The New York Herald has resurrected the old yarn of twenty years ago concerning Marshall Ney.

Judge BAXTER, of the United States District Court, on the application of the creditors of the city of Memphis, has announced his intention to appoint a receiver. "Memphis tried to get rid of her debt by suicide."

dering her affairs in a city. She has only sent herself into the hands of a court that will make her pay.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1879.

SENATE.

Lieutenant-Governor WALKER presiding. A number of House bills were read and referred.

House substitute for Senate bill providing for the rebinding of books of record was adopted.

PRESENTED AND REFERRED.

By Mr. HUNT of Halifax: Memorial of citizens of Halifax in reference to the fence law; also, a resolution on the same subject.

By Mr. MARSHALL: A bill to incorporate Hopewell Grange, No. 585, in Craig county.

By Mr. TYLER: A bill to incorporate the Bank of Dublin.

By Mr. TYLER: A joint resolution praying Congress to pass such laws as will prevent the spread of the cattle disease, &c. Adopted.

By Mr. NASH: A bill to incorporate the Norfolk and Ocean View Railroad and Hotel Company.

By Mr. HUNT of Halifax: A bill to allow H. Hudson, treasurer of Halifax county, extension of time, &c., to make his returns of insolvents.

By Mr. STEVENS: A bill to amend the Code in relation to repeal of fence law in counties that have adopted it.

PASSED.

House bill declaring James river to the condemnation line of the James River and Kanawha canal and the dividing line of the fur trade with certain limits, and in the county of Amherst, a lawful fence.

Senate bill for the protection of fish in certain waters of the Commonwealth (Accomac and Northampton counties).

CLERK FOR THE LIBRARY.

Mr. MASSEY moved to take up from the calendar, out of its order, a bill to allow the Librarian to appoint a clerk at \$500 per annum. Agreed to.

It was stated by the Committee on Retrenchment and Economy that the affairs in the office of Secretary of the Commonwealth were in such a condition as to require the clerk.

Mr. NUNN moved to amend the bill so as to provide that the place shall be filled by a civil service soldier.

After a long debate the amendment was defeated.

Mr. HUNT of Halifax moved to indefinitely postpone the bill. Lost—ayes, 11; noes, 24.

The vote on ordering the pending question resulted—ayes, 17; noes, 17. The Chair voted "No," and so the pending question was not ordered.

Mr. HUNT of Pittsylvania moved to amend the bill so as to reduce the pay of the Secretary of the Commonwealth to \$1,800—ayes, 17; noes, 17.

The previous question was ordered.

On Mr. HUNT's motion the ayes and noes were ordered.

The motion to reduce the Secretary's salary was rejected—ayes, 13; noes, 21.

The bill was then ordered to be engrossed and read a third time—ayes, 22; noes, 12.

THE SPEAKER.

The speaker took up the bill in reference to district and county officers. Various amendments were proposed and defeated.

The bill was discussed at length.

Mr. DANIEL moved to amend so as to tax railroads and canals, and argued at length to sustain his opinion that such taxation is required under the Constitution.

Mr. FLETCHER and Mr. GATZ suggested that Mr. DANIEL bring in a special bill to meet the Senator's idea.

Mr. PHLEGAR joined in the request.

Mr. PAUL said the question might as well be disposed of now.

Mr. DANIEL continued his argument.

HOUSE OF DELEGATES.

The SPEAKER called the House to order at 11 o'clock.

Several committee reports were presented.

PRESENTED AND REFERRED.

By Mr. BROWN: Bill to incorporate the True Friends of Charity, of Franklin county.

By Mr. FOWLER: Petition of citizens of Glade Springs as to local option liquor law.

By Mr. FULTON: Bill for the relief of James Mason.

By Mr. PITTS: Bill in relation to Rappahannock ferries.

By Mr. WILKINSON: Bill to incorporate the Zion Travelers of Danville.

By Mr. WHITACRE: Petition of citizens of Frederick in relation to election laws.

By Mr. THORNTON: Bill to incorporate the Mineral and Gypsum Railroad Company.

THE DOG-TAX BILL.

The motion made by Mr. LACY to reconsider the Senate amendments to this bill was rejected.

The bill as it passed the two houses is as follows:

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia, That any person so desiring may obtain from the commissioner of the revenue of his city or county a license to keep a dog or dogs, paying therefor to the treasurer of said city or county one dollar, and for each additional dog the sum of fifty cents, the license to contain the description and names of such dog or dogs; and upon the receipt of such license such person may have such dog or dogs listed for taxation by the commissioner of the revenue at a valuation to be fixed by the assessor. Any dog so listed is hereby declared personal property. Larceny of any such dog shall be deemed petit larceny, and prosecutions for trespass upon the same shall be for a misdemeanor. But no offence under this act shall be punished with stripes. In any prosecution under this act the defendant shall be allowed to testify in his own behalf.

2. The Auditor of Public Accounts shall prescribe a tag, to be paid for by the owner of the dog, which shall be worn by each dog listed and taxed, as provided in the first section.

3. Nothing contained in this act shall be construed as interfering with special laws imposing a tax on dogs in any county in the Commonwealth, or with any general statute of the State already in force in reference to dogs.

4. This act shall be in force from its passage.

The title is "An act allowing any person to have his dog listed for taxation, thereby making the same personal property."

THE JOHNSON-POE CLAIM.

On motion of Mr. BARBOUT the following bill was taken up out of its order:

A Bill to Provide for the Payment of Certain Fees to James G. Field, M. Boswell Seawell, and John M. Forbes.

[Reported from the Finance Committee.]

Be it enacted by the General Assembly, That the Auditor of Public Accounts be, and he is hereby authorized and directed to draw his warrants upon the Treasury in favor of James G. Field, M. Boswell Seawell and John M. Forbes for the sum of five hundred dollars each, as compensation for their services in making examination into the matter relating to the contract of J. Johnson and N. and J. P. Poe with the Board of Public Works, and reporting thereon; and also in favor of said Seawell and Forbes for two hundred and fifty dollars each, their retaining fee as counsel with the Attorney-General on behalf of the Commonwealth, in the case, instituted in her name against John Johnson and Poe, and Poe in the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond to recover the moneys reported to be due the Commonwealth by said parties, and that the Treasurer do pay said sums to said Field, Seawell, and Forbes, respectively out of any moneys in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated. And the said Seawell and Forbes shall be allowed the further contingent fee of ten per centum on all moneys recovered and paid into the Treasury in full payment for their professional services rendered in the cause.

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had opposed the passage of a similar act last session, and for other reasons of a personal nature, he had taken the trouble to inform himself of the action taken by Congress in the prosecution of this suit, and from that information he was constrained to think that proper diligence and energy had not been displayed by the attorneys. He read a statement made by the clerk of the court, certifying the proceedings in the suit up to date. He showed that subpoenas were issued against John Johnson on October 9, 1877; that a publication issued against Poe, January 2, 1878, and bill filed at April, 1878; and that since then no step had been taken by the attorneys in the suit. That the defendants had prepared their defence, and had been insisting that the cause be heard for a long time. He concluded that the course of the state and justice and fair dealing suggested that this matter should be tried. He therefore proposed to postpone until the 1st of March, in the hope that the cause would in the mean time be heard and determined. He would make the defendants willing to vote to try the case on the condition that the attorneys should receive \$250 each, and this bill proposed to give them \$750 more. The fee was liberal; but he would give it to them when they performed the work that they had undertaken, not before. He thought it beneath the dignity of a great State to make its agents to do the work of a private attorney against any one, and justice demanded that the defendants, who are claiming for a trial, should have it without unnecessary delay. He would say nothing about the merits of the controversy.

By Mr. MARSHALL: A bill to incorporate Hopewell Grange, No. 585, in Craig county.

By Mr. TYLER: A bill to incorporate the Bank of Dublin.